

Don't expect to be perfect! Remember, planning your life is an *art*, not a science. If you are having challenges, however, it may be because you are falling into one of the common pitfalls outlined below.

CHALLENGE #1

Writing your action items on more than one line.

Remember, RPM is a visual chunking system. In other words, part of its power is the ability to see things in a spatially organized format. If you are writing your action items on more than one line, this interferes with your ability to see your RPM blocks as one unit. It also can be overwhelming as the action item may then appear to be more complex than it actually is. **Brevity is power — abbreviate your actions to fit them on one line!**

CHALLENGE #2

Not circling and numbering your Results on your RPM blocks.

Again, to help you visually organize your RPM blocks, **circle each of your Results (in the middle column) so that each one stands out as its own target. In addition, when planning your day, your week, or a project, you will want to number each of the RPM Blocks** (by putting a number next to the Result in the “Results” column). This will allow you to immediately go to the most important RPM blocks in your plan first.

CHALLENGE #3

Including the durations for items you've leveraged when you are adding up your 'Total Time' and/or 'Total Must Time.'

This is one of the fastest ways to cause yourself to feel overwhelmed! **A technique you can use to avoid this is to label your durations in the following way: the time it will take you to leverage the item vs. the time it will take the person to whom you leveraged it to do it.** For example, if you leverage the action item “File RPM Project Plans” to John Smith, it might take you 10 minutes to explain to him what to do and to follow up to make sure he completes it, but it might take John Smith 30 minutes to actually complete the action item. Thus, in the duration box next to that action item you would write, “10 min / 30 min”. Then, when you total up your time for that day, week, or project, you would only include the 10 minutes it took you to leverage the item. **This way you are not including the time that you are not actually spending yourself when you add up your durations.**

CHALLENGE #4

Not being specific enough with your Results.

Did you use words like, “create, establish, determine, begin, resolve, maintain, or make major progress on?” Is it a specific measurable Result? Did you include a date or time frame by which you are committed to achieving it? Is there a specific way to measure if you've achieved it? For example, there's a difference between, “My Result is to become more fit and healthy” and “My Result is to sculpt my body into a 125 lb, 18% body fat, energetic, vibrant, strong, and beautiful woman by May 30, 2020.”

CHALLENGE #5

Not using language the moves you emotionally in your Purpose.

Remember, sometimes a 5¢ word has a lot more power to move you emotionally than a seemingly more sophisticated 50¢ word. There is no right or wrong answer to what belongs in your purpose — as long as you use phrases that drive you to want to complete the result. For example, “To foster a competitive spirit in the jurisdiction in which I work ” may not move you as much as saying, “To kick butt, take names, and leave a legacy in this industry!”

CHALLENGE #6

Not writing Purposes at all!

We call this ‘Rmmmm’ (for Result / MAP) and this is the sound your car engine makes when it’s trying to start but it doesn’t have any gas! **Your Purpose is what will give you all the excitement and drive to follow through.** This is particularly important when the going gets tough and the inevitable challenges come up. Take the time to complete purposes that compel you if you want to be fulfilled in the process.

CHALLENGE #7

Not being specific in your language of action items.

Test your action items. **If you gave this action item to a total stranger, would they understand and be able to complete the action item without any further instruction from you?**

CHALLENGE #8

Not leaving two or three blank lines for additional action items in your RPM Blocks.

When you draw a box around your RPM block, you want to be sure to leave a couple of blank lines in the Massive Action Plan (MAP) column so that you can go back and add action items if you think of them later. This gives you the flexibility to change your action plan as you work toward achieving your result.

CHALLENGE #9

Putting too few actions in your RPM Blocks or creating too many RPM Blocks.

Do most of your RPM Blocks have only 2 or 3 action items in them? If so, you may be chunking your actions together into too many RPM Blocks. As a general rule of thumb, you want to have a minimum of 3 actions in an RPM Block for it to be a separate block, and more often, you’ll have about 5 actions per RPM Block. Look at your RPM Blocks. Can any of them be chunked or grouped together into a common Result?

CHALLENGE #10

Are you managing your life by Categories of Improvement instead of by Projects?

Remember that RPM is a top-down planning method. Always start at the level of your Life Plan and your Categories of Improvement and then work your way down into your RPM Project Plans, RPM Weekly Plans and RPM Daily Plans.

CHALLENGE #11

Rewriting everything and not referencing where to find things. Use abbreviations to create and “index” for where to find things.

To avoid a lot of rewriting, abbreviate as much as possible. For example, when you are transferring RPM Blocks from your week to your day, simply write the title and a couple of key words (i.e. “R3 Wkly: Health”) on your RPM Daily Capture instead of trying to rewrite the whole plan at once. This notation tells you to refer to your RPM Weekly Plan to find the full RPM Plan related to this item.

CHALLENGE #12

Are you committing every single action on your Commit section and trying to manage every single one?

Try Committing only your Result and the ‘must’ action items (the action items you asterisked as the ‘musts’) on the Commit pages.) This will allow you to chunk or group your plans at a little bit higher level so that they feel less overwhelming to you.

CHALLENGE #13

Are you over or under chunking?

Are you creating an RPM Project Plan where a simple RPM Block with suffice? Or, are you trying to manage your life with RPM Blocks when you really need to be working at the level of Categories of Improvement?

CHALLENGE #14

Are you staying flexible in your approach and not trying to master everything in one sitting?

Remember, at its core, RPM is a system of thinking that will focus you on the Results you want, the reasons why you want them (your Purpose) so that you can take the most important actions (your Massive Action Plan) to follow through. If you simply start asking the questions, “What do I really want? What’s the Result I’m committed to?” and “Why do I want this?” instead of focusing your planning around “to-dos” (i.e. “What do I need to do today?”) you’ve taken a giant leap forward toward experiencing a life of massive results and extraordinary fulfillment. Don’t try to get it perfect! Take one step at a time and build momentum through small, but consistent action.



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